

Table 1

Occupational lung diseases: claims for disablement benefit (1985)

| | referred | awarded | success rate |
|--|----------|---------|-----------------|
| B6 extrinsic allergic alveolitis (inc. Farmer's Lung) | 19 | 8 | 42% |
| C15 poisoning by oxides of nitrogen | 8 | 0 | nil |
| C17 poisoning by beryllium or its compounds | 1 | 0 | nil |
| C18 poisoning by cadmium | 9 | 2 | 22% |
| C22b primary carcinoma of bronchus or lung in nickel workers | 3 | 2 | 67% |
| D1 pneumoconiosis | 2300 | 702 | 30% |
| D2 byssinosis | 304 | 37 | 12% |
| D3 diffuse mesothelioma | 260 | 245 | 94% |
| D7 occupational asthma | 282 | 166 | 59% |
| D8 primary carcinoma of lung with evidence of asbestosis and/or bilateral diffuse pleural thickening | 18 | 8 | 44% |
| D9 bilateral diffuse pleural thickening | 88 | 61 | 69% |

So far as the types of cases referred for boarding are concerned, these statistics show very clearly the unbalanced nature of the Centres' workload. Pneumoconiosis accounts for 70 per cent. of the total number of cases seen but only 57 per cent. of actual awards. The great majority of pneumoconiosis cases get no further than the preliminary X-ray scrutiny. For example, in 1982 a total of 6,528 coal-miners were given a preliminary X-ray. The special medical boards went on to consider a total of 1,592 cases, but diagnosed pneumoconiosis in only 467 men (29 per cent. of those boarded but only 7 per cent. of the total seen at the Centres).⁵⁵ Furthermore, an analysis of the incidence of awards for pneumoconiosis by industry shows that successful claims from the coal industry are gradually assuming less significance than was once the case. In 1975 the coal industry gave rise to 683 awards,⁵⁶ compared to only 357 in 1986.⁵⁷ In the same period the number of asbestosis cases more than doubled from 143 to 312. Thus although the total number of awards for pneumoconiosis has remained in the order of 700 per annum for several years now, the internal composition of this total has undergone a dramatic shift away from the coal industry. An even more marked

⁵⁵ *Health and Safety Statistics 1981-82* (1985), Table 10.4, p.62.

⁵⁶ *Social Security Statistics 1978*, Table 25.03, p.126.

⁵⁷ *Social Security Statistics 1987*, Table 25.03, p.148.